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such free distribution. Not only had there been a natural decrease in the number of subscriptions, as had been anticipated, but it was found that many persons were receiving the *Booklist* to whom it was of no particular use. The *Booklist*, without official notices, is simply a tool of trade, of value mainly to the smaller libraries and to certain persons on the staff of larger libraries, yet it was being given a much wider circulation on the basis of membership in the Association. Moreover, for a necessary tool of trade the employee of a library should depend on the library, not on private expenditure.

Inquiry was made of about twenty-five representative librarians as to the comparative desirability of receiving the *Booklist* free or receiving a bulletin which could give fuller information in regard to Association affairs, and the replies, which in many cases voiced the general opinion of a library staff, were almost unanimous in favor of substituting a bulletin for the *Booklist*. The waste involved in the free distribution of the *Booklist* was generally recognized. To the Publishing Board, therefore, it became perfectly clear that, on the establishment of the *Bulletin*, the free distribution of the *Booklist* should be discontinued; but it recognized that an exception should be made in the case of library members, and this for three reasons: 1 library members pay a larger fee and should be entitled to something additional; 2 one copy of the *Booklist* at least will presumably be useful in every library; 3 the A. L. A. desires to increase its library memberships, and the receipt of the *Booklist* will be an additional inducement to libraries, an inducement which will be still further strengthened if the Association decides to publish its proceedings itself and distribute them to members only.

So far, scarcely any objections have been heard, and the subscription list of the *Booklist* has been substantially increased. The Board therefore hopes that its decision will, on the whole, approve itself to members of the Association.

Facts for Consideration

Twenty years ago (1886) in Milwaukee an A. L. A. Publishing Section was organized on a basis similar to that of many publishing societies, with a subscribing membership, each member to receive annual publications in return for the payment of his annual dues. This organization was an outgrowth of the work of the Cooperation committee, and took final shape at this time as the result of a letter of Mr W. I. Fletcher to the *Nation* which called attention to the great expense involved in the repeated duplication of work by libraries and to the advantage to be gained by cooperation.

After a few years trial it was found that the "publishing society" plan did not correspond with actual needs and conditions, and the Publishing Board was established in 1900 to continue the work of the Section. The Board is essentially a committee of the Association, to which is entrusted the direction and development of its publishing affairs. Financially it is entirely distinct from the Association, but has been indebted to it from time to time for grants of money. At present its main support is the Carnegie Endowment Fund of \$100,000. Its object has been from the beginning "to secure the preparation and publication of catalogs, indexes, and other bibliographic and library aids."

The original members of the Board were Messrs Fletcher, Dewey, Bowker, C. A. Cutter, Lane, and S. S. Green. During twenty years Messrs Dewey and Lane have served continuously (Mr Lane as Treasurer from 1886 to 1904). Mr Fletcher served until 1905. Mr Bowker was a member for two periods, of three and nine years. Mr George Iles was a member from 1893 to 1900, and devoted to the Board's affairs an unflagging interest and substantial pecuniary support.

The publications already issued and those proposed, but not yet executed, fall into three classes: 1 those which might be called tools of trade, forming two groups, one for

the reference department, the other for the cataloger; 2 those pertaining to selection of books; 3, the last to be developed, publications for instruction.

To the reference group of the first class belong the *A. L. A. index to general literature*, and the *Index to portraits*. The former was first proposed by Dr Poole in the preface to the 1882 edition of his *Index to periodical literature*. This was one of the first publications undertaken by the Board, and is now in its second and much enlarged edition.

That an index to portraits should be compiled was one of the early suggestions, but no beginning was made for nearly ten years, and now after ten years of preparation, the *A. L. A. index to portraits* has just been published by the Library of Congress.

The aids for catalogers are of two kinds, one to help them do their work, the other to do it for them. The *A. L. A. catalog rules* and the *List of subject headings for use in dictionary catalogs* represent one, while the printed catalog cards represent the other.

As early as 1853 at the first meeting of librarians, attention was called to the waste in cataloging methods, each library doing for itself what might be done once for all. The problem has been constantly studied, but not till 1896 did the Board make any efforts at all approaching success. At that time the Board undertook to issue catalog cards for current books, a work which had been begun by the Library Bureau in 1893. The Board tried every means in its power to make this work of real help to libraries, but lack of support by libraries, and lack of necessary capital were serious drawbacks. The work however continued until 1901, when it was transferred to the Library of Congress.

To provide for the analytical work which many libraries are unable to do for themselves, the Board issues cards for a large number of serial publications, and miscellaneous sets. More than two million cards have been distributed among the libraries of America and Europe.

In these days of constantly increasing book production the selection of those books which the library is to buy, or the reader to read, is no small task. In the work done by the Board in this direction, annotation has played an important part. A critical or descriptive note is a great help, and when the element of comparison with other works is added, evaluation reaches its full usefulness. The *A. L. A. catalog* represents the largest attempt of this kind. The *Catalog of the A. L. A. library* of 5000 volumes, published in 1893, and distributed free by the Government, had been of assistance to new libraries in making first purchases, and to older ones in filling gaps. The *A. L. A. catalog* of 8000 volumes, published in 1904, brings together the best books on different subjects, and supplants the earlier catalog. To keep this constantly renewed, the *A. L. A. booklist* is issued eight times a year, listing and annotating the best books from month to month.

The *List of books for girls and women* was edited for the Board by Mr George Iles to illustrate the usefulness of annotation. It covers a wide range of subjects. Miss Kroeger's *Guide to the study and use of reference books* was compiled primarily for the use of students in library and normal schools in order to familiarize them with the working tools of a library. Mr Ernest Savage, in his recent book on annotation says that Miss Kroeger has reached the high water mark in annotation in America.

Aids for the selection of books on special subjects have been confined to the *Bibliography of fine art* by Russell Sturgis and E. H. Krehbiel, and the *Literature of American history* edited by J. N. Larned. For the preparation of these books, and also for work on the *Books for girls and women*, Mr Iles secured the aid of specialists, and generously paid the cost of manufacture as well.

Mr W. D. Johnston has selected and annotated titles on English history, while Mr P. P. Wells has continued the annota-

tions of new titles on American history, thus keeping the Larned volume up to date.

Special classes of people have not been forgotten in the preparation of aids. The children have had the first and most continuous consideration. To guide their reading have been issued Sargent's *Reading for the young*, and Hewins' *Books for boys and girls* in two independent editions. Another list of similar character is now being prepared by the Carnegie library in Pittsburgh.

Foreigners have been the latest class to be helped. The brief *List of French fiction* issued some years ago, was intended rather for English speaking people who wished to read French. Lists are now in preparation, intended to help the foreign people among us to learn of American history and customs through their own language, as well as to guide them in finding the best in their own literature.

The books already mentioned have been of use to the individuals and libraries who knew in a measure what they wished to accomplish. But there are many communities untouched by the library, and for these a series of tracts and handbooks are being issued, pointing out why a public library is needed, and how to start it, and giving information about buildings and furnishings, administration of libraries, cataloging, etc.

A new edition of the *List of subject headings*, and a code of *A. L. A. catalog rules* prepared by a committee of the A. L. A. are the next important publications to be issued.

The Publishing Board has a wide field of work, and one capable of almost infinite extension, as the Board secures additional means for publication and learns by experience how to provide most efficiently the tools which libraries need.

A large part of its present financial support the Board owes to Mr Carnegie's endowment of \$100,000, the income of which is at its disposal for preparation of library aids. This gift was a logical supplement to Mr Carnegie's other great gifts for the pro-

motion of libraries. Library buildings are useless unless well stocked with books and wisely administered. An endowment which supports the publication of useful library guides and manuals, thereby facilitates the administration of libraries and is of direct value to every library founded.

But the Board cannot do its best work without the support and cooperation of libraries themselves, in suggesting work to be done, helping in the preparation of lists and other aids, and using what the Board publishes. The Board does not aim to make money, its prime object being service, but it does try to make its sales pay for at least the cost of manufacture of its publications.

Will you not see that your library and its trustees do their share towards helping others by supporting the work of the Publishing Board?

Book-binding Committee

Points Worth Remembering in Rebinding Fiction and Juvenile Books

1 It is generally not advisable to mend books in the original publisher's binding. Loose leaves or illustrations may be tipped in if the work is carefully done, but no attempt should be made to fix loose signatures, and on no account should paste be put on the back of the book. If this is done it will be impossible to have the book rebound so that it will wear well. The life of the book is really shortened by such false economy. If the book is broken at the joint even to a very small extent, send at once to be rebound.

2 Do not resew and put back in publisher's covers. If the book is properly sewed and backed it will be too large for the original covers. It also makes it impossible to rebind, so that the book will wear well. If properly rebound the first time the book goes to the bindery, it will circulate as many times as if it had been recased and then rebound, and the expense will be less.

3 Do not wait till the book falls apart before sending to the bindery. As soon as a book becomes a trifle shaky in the